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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 THE HAGUE 001585

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STATE FOR ISN/CB, VCI/CCB, L/ACV, IO/S
SECDEF FOR OSD/ISP
JOINTSTAFF FOR DD PMA-A FOR WTC
COMMERCE FOR BIS (GOLDMAN)
NSC FOR DICASAGRANDE
WINPAC FOR WALTER

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SUBJECT: CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION: CHEMICAL WEAPONS
CONVENTION (CWC): U.S. CW DESTRUCTION 100% EXTENSION REQUEST

REF: THE HAGUE 1530

This is CWC-064-06.

Summary

¶1. (U) Reactions to the U.S. 100% extension request, and the recently submitted draft decision, continue to be surprisingly muted. However, comments over the past several weeks, and during EC-46, are beginning to shape a way forward for the U.S. strategy to gain approval for its extension request at EC-47 and CSP-11.

U.S CW DESTRUCTION UPDATES

¶2. (U) In general, the latest approach to the U.S. CW Destruction Update, delivered at the destruction informals, was well received. (Based on feedback that details from previous briefings in April and May were more than adequate, and that the briefings focused too heavily on excuses and not on a clear path forward, del and DOD worked to develop a briefing that focused instead on a site-by-site update, to include specific, current challenges faced at each site.) Delegations appreciated the focused approach, and del was told by UK del members that the consistent transparency and approach would be instrumental in eventual approval of the extension request. Del believes it will be effective to maintain a factual, forward-looking focus in future briefings.

¶3. (SBU) However, to ensure a thorough understanding of site-specific challenges, and to set the stage for approval of the U.S. extension request by CSP 11, del recommends that to give the briefing greater political impact, Ambassador Javits, as appropriate, take a more active role in the briefing to emphasize the U.S. political commitment to completion of destruction as quickly as possible.

¶4. (SBU) In addition, although it is readily apparent to

those involved in the program, the idea that devotion of greater resources to the U.S. destruction program would not significantly alter the pace of destruction is evidently still quite difficult for some delegations to grasp. It may be useful to provide more detail on some of the specific challenges faced at certain sites. Del also appreciates the opportunity it has had to provide input in the development of recent briefings, and recommends this approach continue so that feedback from local delegations to the OPCW can be used to shape an effective briefing for EC-47.

NATIONAL STATEMENTS

¶15. (U) Of the relatively few statements during the EC-46 general debate, most references to CW destruction were variations on a &general concern/disappointment⁸ theme that major possessors were making such slow progress toward the complete elimination of chemical weapons stockpiles. Finland, speaking on behalf of the EU, also expressed strong support for visits to possessor states that would enable the EC to &assess progress⁸ and, more notably, to &highlight to national decision makers in these States Party the expectations of the international community.⁸ (Del comment: The second element would seem to be formal evidence of continued UK and German efforts to muster support for the idea of visits to capitals, as opposed to destruction sites alone, in order to retain the &appropriate political element.⁸ End comment.)

¶16. (U) The Mexican statement was also sharply critical of slow progress in possessor states, including a confusing statement implying that requests to extend destruction deadlines to 2012 were inconsistent with the Convention (when

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presumably the real concern was the indication in the U.S. detailed plan that destruction operations may extend beyond 2012). Mexico requested a more detailed rationale for the extension requests that have been submitted, and noted that detailed plans should include &actions necessary for complete fulfillment of obligations under the Convention⁸ and &maintain consistency and adhere to commitments.⁸ (Del comment: This seems to be a reference to the same line of reasoning encouraged/followed by the Russian delegation, which is to submit a plan that conforms to the Convention, regardless of whether or not it is achievable. End comment.)

Finally, Mexico expressed support for the idea of visits to possessor states, and recommended that these visiting delegations be supplemented by independent experts with a technical background.

¶17. (U) Interestingly, despite UK and German warnings that the U.S. could expect the NAM and other, non-WEOG States Party to insist upon visits (to include visits in capitals), no reference was made to the UK proposal by either Malaysia (speaking on behalf of the NAM and China) or Sudan (speaking for the Africa Group). Both statements included the standard lines expressing serious concern over the pace of CW destruction and urging possessor states to adhere to Convention deadlines, but made no mention of site visits. Sudan also referred to clear indications that, even after the 5-year extension period, major possessors may be unable to complete destruction, thus (perhaps inadvertently) publicly placing the U.S. and Russia in the same category, a distinction the Russians have worked assiduously to avoid.

RECENT REACTIONS TO U.S. DRAFT DECISION

¶18. (U) Although the U.S. decision was deferred to the next EC session without discussion, there were two notable exceptions. South African Ambassador Mkhize, in her role as EC Chair, met with Ambassador Javits and del reps to express

the &general concern⁸ of the Council regarding U.S. CW destruction, which she later defined as a disbelief that a country as wealthy and powerful as the U.S. could not somehow exercise the political will to meet the April 29, 2012 deadline set by the Convention. When del reps noted a lack of concern, or even questions, at almost any level (capitals, Ambassadorial, or working level), Mkhize explained that, at least locally, perhaps delegations were reluctant to approach a highly respected figure like Ambassador Javits with difficult political questions. Del reps were unable to elicit specific concerns from Mkhize, who admitted it was difficult to address undefined issues, and promised she would herself consider ways to elicit more specific feedback.

¶19. (U) Also of note was the last-minute Iranian (successful) attempt to draw public attention to the &differences⁸ between the U.S. and Russian draft decisions. As reported in REFTEL, Iran refused to approve report language on the two draft decisions, initially citing references to previous Conference decisions as problematic, but quickly moving on to highlight the U.S. potential inability to meet 2012, and the fact that Russia has made no such statements. Iran used later sidebar discussions to press U.S. reps on their anticipated reaction if consensus was not reached on their draft decision.

¶110. (U) Ambassador Javits explained that, in the absence of a CSP decision, the issue would be &in limbo,⁸ with the U.S. proceeding under its &in principle⁸ extension from the 2003 CSP decision and that the obligation to destroy all CW stocks by April 29, 2012 would remain in effect. Javits further offered that the U.S. would be &in the hands of the member states,⁸ and would continue to do everything in its power to destroy its CW stocks as quickly as possible. Despite murmurings of dissatisfaction with the U.S. extension request, it is unlikely that most delegations would actually block a draft decision. Iran, however, is showing an early, but expected, inclination to use &potential U.S. non-compliance⁸ to its political advantage.

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WAY AHEAD

¶111. (SBU) As the UK's proposal for &terms of reference⁸ for visits to U.S. and Russian CW destruction sites have now been in circulation for several weeks, del recommends distributing U.S. proposed site visit parameters in the several weeks following EC-46. Distribution now, as opposed to closer to EC-47, would have the advantage of making the U.S. bottom line clearly known early in the process. It has also been obvious since April that delegations are unlikely to provide feedback in the absence of documents that can be used as a basis for discussion. Despite the danger that early presentation of text lends itself to protracted negotiations, public availability of the informal proposal along with the draft decision text could be instrumental in eliciting constructive feedback in the run-up to EC-47.

¶112. (SBU) Delegation has been informed by German Ambassador to the OPCW Alexander Petri (also the EC Vice Chair for the CW Cluster) that he is under considerable pressure to hold some sort of discussion/consultations on &CW Destruction.⁸ When pressed, Petri has provided little information on the source of these requests, and it is not unlikely that he is creating some of this &pressure⁸ himself, given the strong views he has already expressed on the U.S. extension request. However, it has become increasingly obvious that the purpose of convening such a group would actually be to talk about the U.S. and Russian draft decisions. While del has pointed out to Petri that its decision language is already fairly accommodating in several areas, and that the general concern is pressuring the Russians to improve their text, an informal session of this nature could (if carefully managed) serve the

purpose of drawing out delegations, positions on the decisions, something sometimes more difficult to accomplish in bilateral discussions.

¶13. (SBU) In the run-up to EC-47, it will be critical to ascertain where States Party stand on the U.S. extension request, and to determine which SPs specifically are inclined to actually block the draft decision. Del will use the next several months to approach all member states of the Executive Council, preferably one-on-one, to seek opinions, provide clarification, and foster an atmosphere of cooperation, understanding and responsiveness to political and technical concerns. Del will continue to push back on attempts to formally define site visit parameters, and remind WEOG colleagues that a common goal of increased transparency in the U.S. and Russia is best achieved by focusing on principle as opposed to details. Del will also work quietly with the Russian del to encourage acceptance of site visits, if only as a political gesture, and to consider supporting the U.S. proposal for specific parameters.

SANDERS SENDS.
BLAKEMAN